

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 859
By Ramsey

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Senator Curtis S. Person, Jr., on his meritorious service as a member of the General Assembly.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this Body should recognize those fellow legislators who have performed their duties with remarkable dexterity and unprecedented devotion and whose efforts to excel have brought substantial benefits to their respective communities and to this great State; and

WHEREAS, Senator Curtis Person's illustrious career in the Senate will come to an end at the adjournment sine die of the 104th General Assembly, as he has announced his retirement from this august Body; and

WHEREAS, Senator Curtis S. Person, Jr., has for many years been a prominent and highly influential figure in the political, social, and civic lives of Memphis and Shelby County, and he has served his constituents in numerous capacities, always working diligently at his elected duties and expending the necessary effort to understand the opposing sides of complex issues; and

WHEREAS, in November of 1968, the good people of Senate District 31 in Shelby County evinced their great faith in the political and governmental capabilities of Curtis Person by electing him as their Senator, a position in which he has performed admirably; and

WHEREAS, during his forty years in the General Assembly, thirty-eight years in the Senate and one term in the House of Representatives (85th General Assembly), Senator Person has been prominent as a dedicated and well-informed legislator who always votes his conscience; and

WHEREAS, for nearly thirty years, Senator Person has dedicated his career away from the General Assembly to helping children, who hold a very special place in his heart; he has

astutely served the Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County as Chief Referee (1977-1995) and Chief Legal Officer (1995-present); and

WHEREAS, in addition to his illustrious service with the Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County, Senator Person is a dynamic and aggressive participant in the legislative process and has earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues for the outstanding contributions he has made as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee (95th and 104th General Assemblies); and

WHEREAS, he also serves as a member of the Senate General Welfare Committee and the Senate Ethics Committee; he formerly rendered outstanding service as Vice Chairman of the Select Committee on Children and Youth (100th through 102nd General Assemblies); and

WHEREAS, during his twenty years as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Curtis Person has provided visionary leadership, an unparalleled knowledge of the rules of procedure, the patience of Job, and the skills of a Mississippi riverboat captain in guiding a majority of attorney committee members through the process of carefully deliberating, fully debating, and frequently amending the multitude of bills dealing with complex legal issues that are referred to the committee; and

WHEREAS, prior to his meritorious tenure as a committee chairman, Curtis Person was a valuable component of Republican leadership in the Senate, serving as Senate Republican Whip (1973-76), Senate Republican Caucus Chairman (1976-82), Chairman of the Shelby County Republican Legislative Delegation (1977 and 1983-84), and Assistant Senate Republican Leader of the 96th General Assembly, and

WHEREAS, he has also served with distinction as the Co-Chairman of the Shelby County Legislative Delegation (1973-74) and Vice Chairman of the Shelby County Legislative Delegation (1970, 1975, 1976, and 1985-88); and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Senator Person has been honored numerous times for his heartfelt, and usually effective, advocacy for a group or cause as a member of the General Assembly and his dedicated public service as civic leader or citizen; this singular gentleman has received the Friend of the Family Award from the Tennessee Home Education Association (2004), Thomas B. Murphy Longevity of Service Award from the Southern Legislative Conference (2004), 2003-2004 Champion Award from the Tennessee

Disability Coalition, 2003-2004 Humane Legislator Award from The Humane Society of the United States, Animal Control Association of Tennessee's Legislator of the Year Award for 2004, County Officials Association of Tennessee's Outstanding Legislator Award for 2004, Tennessee Cable Telecommunications Association's Legislative Leadership Award for 2003-2004, Tennessee Trial Lawyers' Legislator of the Year Award for 2003, Tennessee Development Districts Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 2003, Honorary Fellow & Legislator of the Year Award from the Opticians Association of America (2003), Lifetime Achievement Award from Defenders of Freedom (2002), Metro Animal Services' Animal Advocacy Award (2002), Elvis Presley Memorial Martial Arts Hall of Fame's Special Honor (2002), Tennessee Juvenile Services Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 2001, Tennessee Dispensing Opticians Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 2000, Shelby County Republican Party Chairman's Award (1999), American Lung Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 1999, Tennessee Task Force Against Domestic Violence's Outstanding Legislator of the Year Award for 1999, Tennessee Trial Lawyers Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 1997, County Officials Association of Tennessee's Outstanding Legislator of the Year Award for 1996, Tennessee District Attorneys General Conference's Legislator of the Year Award for 1995, Tennessee Association of Child Care's Champion for Children Award (1995), Eagle Forum Eagle Award (1994), United Tennessee League's Bill Bates Legislative Award (1994), Tennessee Head Injury Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 1993, County Officials Association of Tennessee's Distinguished Service Award (1989), Tennessee Trial Lawyers Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 1989, Tennessee Medical Association's Community Service Award (1989), Tennessee Alcohol and Drug Association's Legislator of the Year Award for 1988, Tennessee Mothers Against Drunk Driving's Outstanding Legislator of the Year Award for 1988, National Organization of M.A.D.D.'s Government Leader Against Drunk Driving Award (1988), Memphis Civitan Club's Americanism Award (1986), Tennessee Republican Party's Outstanding Legislator Award for 1985, The University of Memphis Distinguished Alumni Award (1982), Tennessee Council of Juvenile Court Judges' Outstanding Service to Children Award (1981), Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association President's Service Award (1981), Shelby County Republican Party's Americanism Award (1979), Tennessee Association of Children with Learning Disabilities' Tennessee's Advocate of the Year

for Handicapped Children Award (1978), Jaycees' Memphis Outstanding Young Man Award (1969), Jaycees' Tennessee's Outstanding Young Man Award (1969), Memphis-Shelby County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Freedom Award (1969), and the President's Service Award from the Tennessee Juvenile Services Association (1997); and

WHEREAS, a gentleman who truly appreciates the responsibilities, as well as the privileges, of citizenship, Senator Curtis Person has served as a valuable member and officer of many civic, professional, and governmental organizations, including the following: Junior League of Memphis Advisory Board (1995-1998), Omicron Delta Kappa Leadership Honor Society (1986), President of Memphis Heart Gala, Inc. (1983-84), President of Handicapped, Inc. (1972-74), Chairman of the Memphis Commission on Drug Abuse (1970-71), President of The University of Memphis National Alumni Association (1970-71), President of the Memphis-Shelby County Mental Health Association (1969-73), Charter President of The University of Memphis Tiger Rebounders (1965-66), former Trustee of the Memphis State University Foundation, former Director of the Southern Golf Association, former Executive Committee member for the St. Jude's Memphis Open Golf Classic, 32nd degree Mason, Shriner, Mississippi Bar Association, former Jaycee, Kappa Sigma, and Phi Alpha Delta (legal) and Phi Alpha Theta (scholastic) fraternities; and

WHEREAS, the son of Curtis S. and Helen Hamilton Person, Senator Person earned his Bachelor of Science degree from The University of Memphis and his law degree (LL.B.) from the University of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, his many legal and legislative accomplishments aside, Curtis S. Person, Jr., is most appreciative of the love and companionship he shares with his wife, Geraldean, who is known to friends and family as "Gerri;" six children, Kathleen Longoria, Curtis S. Person, III, Dr. Patrick R. Person, Charles Couch, Jr., Jerri Leigh Meister, and Christopher S. Person; ten grandchildren; and his loveable Yorkies, Princeton and Peyton; and

WHEREAS, Senator Person's announcement of his retirement from the General Assembly has greatly disappointed and disconcerted his fellow lawmakers, and his considerable talents and energies will be sorely missed by the good people of Senate District 31; and

WHEREAS, this Body finds it appropriate to bid farewell to our friend and colleague, Senator Curtis Person; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor Senator Curtis S. Person, Jr., on his meritorious service to Tennessee as a member of the General Assembly, especially during his illustrious tenure as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend him for his countless contributions and many good works in service of the citizens of Senate District 31 and the greater Memphis and Shelby County community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend to Senator Curtis Person our best wishes for much success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to Senator Curtis Person as a token of our esteem.